



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

FEB 16 2005

SMALL ENTITY COMPLIANCE GUIDE

Dear Gillnet Vessel Owner/Operator:

This letter is to remind you of gillnet requirements implemented under the Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan (HPTRP) for Gulf of Maine and Mid-Atlantic waters. The regulations implementing the HPTRP found at 50 CFR 229.33 and 50 CFR 229.34 for the Gulf of Maine and Mid-Atlantic areas, respectively, specify the closure areas and gillnet requirements that apply to vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching Northeast (NE) multispecies.

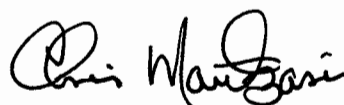
Enclosed with this letter is a summary of the HPTRP gear requirements for both the Gulf of Maine and Mid-Atlantic areas. If you fish in New England waters, refer to pages one and two of the enclosure for information about New England closure areas. Please find information concerning gillnet pinger requirements on page four of the enclosure. If you fish in Mid-Atlantic waters, which apply to all waters bounded on the east by 72°30' and on the south by the North Carolina/South Carolina border (33°51' N. latitude), refer to pages three and four of the enclosure for information about Mid-Atlantic closure areas and associated gear modification requirements. **Pages five and six of the enclosure depict the areas covered by the HPTRP (Maine through North Carolina) on NOAA nautical charts.**

Be advised that the HPTRP regulations may overlap with other Fishery Management Plan regulations. Please refer to the NE Multispecies regulations found at 50 CFR Part 648 for information about any overlapping restricted areas. Should any regulations overlap with the HPTRP regulations, the more stringent regulations will apply.

For a complete description of the HPTRP, see 50 CFR 229.33 and 50 CFR 229.34 or visit the HPTRP web site at www.nero.noaa.gov/porptrp. If you have any questions regarding this letter or the information provided, please contact the Northeast Region's Protected Resources Division, at (978) 281-9328 extension 6505.

You may also receive permit holder letters by e-mail by clicking on "What's New" on our web site at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/nero> or via fax by providing a fax number through a written request to the above address, or by faxing your request to 978-281-9394.¹

Sincerely,


Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

¹ This small entity compliance guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

